

## Motivation and Demotivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language EFL: A Case Study of College Students of Tourism Sciences

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### Abstract

Learning English as a foreign language LEF mainly exists in the countries where English is not spoken, and there, it will be the role of motivation and demotivation to learn a language that is not the mother tongue. Motivation is the learner's attitude, desire, and willingness to enlarge the student's knowledge in a foreign language. Demotivation connotes the opposite meaning. Both concepts are caused by internal and external factors. A sample of students in the College of Tourism Sciences was taken to do a questionnaire to draw out motivation and demotivation for LEF. Undergraduate and graduate students were chosen for the questionnaire in order to be compared. What are the things that motivate foreign students to study English? What are the factors of demotivation that may affect their learning of English? Is there a positive or negative attitude towards learning English as a foreign language? In conclusion, motivations outweigh demotivation which proves that there is a positive view towards learning English. Lower results & poor achievements are related to demotivating factors, and apparently, they hinder the learning of English.

### I. Introduction

Language has an important role in our lives; it symbolizes oneself in the different societies where individuals interact and use it to communicate. Hence, learning a foreign language facilitates communication between countries, especially if this foreign language is an international one like English today.

Motivation for learning a language is a combination of the learner's attitude, desires, and willingness to broaden the effort to learn the second language (Richards & R. Schmidt, 2010:377). In general, motivation is "considered to be one of the primary causes of success and failure in a second language learning (ibid.: 378). Broadly speaking, demotivation for learning English is varied. Firstly, it was defined as external forces that reduce the motivational basis of an action (Dornyei, 2001 cited in Li & Zhou, 2017). Later on, studies have proved that in addition to external factors for demotivation there are internal factors as well, like self-confidence and negative attitude (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009).

What are the things that motivate FEL for studying English? What are the obstacles to learning English? What are the demotivation factors that may affect their learning and results of English at the end of the course? What are the reasons for poor achievements and lower levels in the English language in the Tourism department of the college of Touristic Sciences? Is there a positive or negative attitude towards learning English as a foreign language? If motivation is more than demotivation that gives a positive view towards learning English; if the demotivation outweighs motivation, then there is a negative view towards learning English. Lower results & poor achievements are related to demotivation factors, and apparently, they hinder their learning of English.

Presenting motivations may develop the ways for learning English & of teaching. On the other hand, knowing demotivation is considered the main cause for failure in learning a second language. That is the purpose of the study, while the significance of it is, as far as the researcher knows, no such study was done concerning learning English at the tourism department. Moreover, it is to show the effects of motivation & demotivation factors on the results of learning a foreign language (English).

Concerning the limits of the study, it has got a sample of bachelor students of two classes (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> stages, studying online) and Master students (as they are studying by everyday

existence/ offline) in the Tourism department only. Secondly, it has got the motivation & demotivation; henceforth, things that are motivated learning English, and obstacles in learning English as a foreign language. Lastly, the researcher does not deal with demotivation that is related to teacher-related factors, nor inadequate teaching facilities. She deals mainly with students' attitudes.

Coming to the procedures, i.e. the research methodology:

1. Briefly, reviewing the literature of obstacles of learning English to EFL students in a few countries where English represents a foreign or second language. In addition, the meanings of the expressions used in this study.
2. Making a questionnaire to a sample of students of the classes mentioned above to know the motivation & demotivation or the obstacles that affect learning the English language.
3. Conclusions are drawn out based on the discussion of the survey.

## **II. Motivation & Demotivation**

The following four main types of motivation (see *ibid.* & Richards, n.d.:14) are dealt with in this study:

- 1- Instrumental Motivation, for example, the motive to learn a language for practical benefits.
- 2- Integrative motivation, for example, the motive to learn a language for interaction with people of the target language community to be valued as a member of them.
- 3- Intrinsic motivation, that is to learn for the language itself: that means to enjoy language learning.
- 4- Extrinsic motivation, that is to be motivated by external factors (parental pressure, social expectations, academic requirements, or other sources of rewards or punishment).

Oxford (1998 cited in Li & Zhou) states four de-motivators:

Undesired student-teacher relationship, teacher's negative attitude towards the L2 class, the mismatch between teaching style and students' learning style, and unreasonably designed classroom activities.

Dornyei (2001) mentions nine factors that cause demotivation in the foreign language learning process:

Teacher-related factors, inadequate teaching facilities, reduced self-confidence, negative attitude towards learning the target language, second language as a compulsory course, interference of learning another foreign language, negative attitude towards learning target language countries, attitude toward peers around, [and] learning materials.

The main points of demotivation that are dealt with in this study are the negative attitude towards the L2 learning, reduced self-confidence, second language as a compulsory course, negative view towards learning target language countries and the attitude towards peers around.

## **III. EFL English as a Foreign Language**

Studying English as a foreign language **EFL** is to instruct non-native speakers to learn English in a country where English is not commonly spoken (Wikipedia). Also, it is known as studying English as a second language **ESL**, as an additional language **EAL**, or English for speakers of other languages **ESOL**.

Some have taken the term **ESL** as English of secondary importance, especially in a multilingual country (Wikipedia). Other recent terms are used, such as English Language Learners **ELL** and English Learners **EL** (*ibid.*)

English has great influence, as it is taught all over the world. In countries where English is a second language, teaching or training has evolved into two directions: "instruction for people who intend to live in countries where English dominates and instruction for those

who do not". (ibid.) These divisions are widely developed and been to some extent the way schools are established and classes are held.

EFL is usually learned either to pass exams as a necessary part of one's education or for career progression while one works for an organization or business with an international focus. "EFL may be part of the state school curriculum in countries where English has no special status." Baraj Kachu

#### **IV. Reviewing Literature**

After reviewing some studies [See William (2011), Erkan (2012), Akbari (2015) and Cozma (2015)] related to learning/teaching the English language in different countries the following points are drawn out:

1. There are countries where English is not spoken but is compulsory learning as a foreign language, such as Iraq, Iran, Turkey, or China.
2. There are countries where English is taken as an official language though it is not spoken as a mother tongue, such as India, Pakistan, or the Philippines. English in the previous countries is learned as a second language.
3. Countries where English is learned as a second language as well, but it could be spoken among some people as in Canada, Australia, or New Zealand. However, there are some of the European countries that do not take English as L2, since they have multilingualism adoption.

During reviewing problems that cause hindrances for learning English as a foreign language in a few countries, obstacles are summarized and drawn out as such:

1. The main psychological obstacle of college students' English learning is the lack of interest and confidence in learning English. Psychological barriers are related to unscientific learning methods, poor self-control, and teaching mistakes.
2. English is not used as a means for daily communication. Students do not study English as a language of communication, by creating groups of conversation, for example. They study English only to pass the exam and success. Moreover, despite their poor foundation of this language, there are few attempts for improving their English skills.
3. In general, there is a lack of modern means, methods of teaching, a clear policy for learning a foreign language (English). There are no class discussions or interactions in the English language. Moreover, there are shortage of English teachers, flawed syllabi, and examination system.

#### **V. Learning English in the College of Tourism Sciences**

English is taught for four years in the Tourism department even before it has become a college in 2013. However, most of the students have weak English. Moreover, the college itself accepts low-average students and English is not taken as a frontal subject to study.

## VI. Analysis of the Collected Data:

General Information -table (1)

Numbers & Percentages	Bachelor students	Master students	The grades of English
The whole no.	54	23	
Males	40.7 %	56 %	
Females	59.3 %	43 %	
Non-scientific study	63 %	47 %	
Scientific study	27.8 %	30 %	
Institutional study	9.3 %	8 %	
Grades of English in the secondary school	18.5 % 22.2 % 29.6 % 18.5 % 11.1 %	4.34 % 17 % 21.7 % 34 % 21.7 %	Excellent Very good Good Medium Pass

After reviewing the table (1) above (entitled general information), concerning bachelors, we can see that the females are more than males. However, most of them studied non-scientific branches in the secondary school. Concerning their English grades are "Good" for most of them, and that shows that they are generally good in English.

Concerning Master students: firstly, they are less in number than bachelor students; however, they have more male students than the bachelors. Moreover, they, like bachelors, show a higher percentage of unscientific study than scientific & institutional study. Finally, the English grades during Bachelor's study mostly are "medium"; it shows that they are not good enough in English learning.

Concerning the statements and their equations, review the following table (2):

The Questionnaire-table (2)

Equations	Acceptable	Accep.	Unacceptable	Unaccep.	Neutral	Neut.
The statements	for Bachelors	for Masters	for Bachelors	for Masters	for Bachelors	for Masters
Studying English is interesting	63 %	78 %	none	none	33.3 %	34 %
It is a foreign language for me	16.7 %	60 %	63 %	21 %	20.4 %	20 %
Learning English needs effort & time	74.1 %	80 %	none	none	20.4 %	18 %
Learning English benefits a future job.	96.3 %	70 %	none	none	none	30 %
Learning English benefits me for communication with foreigners	90.7 %	61 %	none	21 %	7.4 %	18 %
My Environment encourages me to learn English	46.3 %	50 %	27.8 %	30 %	25.9 %	20 %
Competition with my friends encourage me to learn English	61.1 %	46 %	20.4 %	28 %	18.5 %	26 %
The lecturer encourages me to learn English	77.8 %	45 %	none	25 %	18.5 %	27 %

Two hours a week is enough to learn English	53.7 %	10 %	25.9 %	70 %	20.4 %	20 %
To stop studying English for a while may make me weak in English and forget it.	9.3 %	39 %	79.6 %	39 %	11.1 %	21 %
I'm studying English to pass my class and success	85.2 %	90 %	none	none	7.45 %	10 %
Trying to improve my English language	68.5 %	34 %	8 %	39 %	24.1 %	26 %

Discussing the questionnaire table (2) is shown below by presenting firstly the statement of the equation:

**(Studying English is interesting)**

Both of them have intrinsic motivation, i.e. they enjoy studying English. However, most of them have low English marks.

**(It is a foreign language for me)**

A higher percentage of students consider English familiar for them to learn.

**(Learning English needs effort & time)**

Here students know that learning English needs effort & time, so that could be a kind of demotivation for studying English.

**(Learning English benefits a future job)**

Unanimously, students here confess that they need English in their future work. That is the extrinsic motivation for learning English.

**(Learning English benefits me for communication with foreigners)**

The presentation of this point refers to the previous, i.e. students know that being good in English paves their way to communicate with foreigners. That is an external factor of extrinsic motivation for learning English.

**(My Environment encourages me to learn English)**

The percentages show nearly half of the students have the encouragement for learning English in their environment. However, that means the other half has somehow a demotivation among their environment.

**(Competition with my friends encourage me to learn English)**

More than half of bachelor students have the motivation of competition to learn English. However, less than half of master students have this motivation.

**(The lecturer encourages me to learn English)**

Here encouragement of the lecturer plays a great role in motivation to learn English.

**(Two hours a week is enough to learn English)**

More than half of bachelor students are convinced that two hours a week is enough for learning English. On the contrary, master students think the opposite, i.e. two hours are not enough.

**(To stop studying English for a while may make me weak in English and forget it)**

The percentages here, with the bachelors, show that stopping for a while to learn English does not prevent students to learn; it means motivation. On the other hand, the masters have an equal percentage of acceptable and unacceptable; it means they have demotivation of stopping to learn English.

**(I'm studying English to pass my class and success)**

About a unanimous number of students' study English to pass and succeed in their field of study. It is a motivation.

**(Trying to improve the English language)**

More than half of bachelors are trying to improve their English; that means there is a motivation for learning English. However, master students have no motivation to improve their English.

**VI. Results (Comparative between Bachelor & Master Students)**

1. Females are more than males among bachelor students, while males are more than females among master students.
2. Both bachelors and masters have more students completed unscientific study branch than scientific and institutional study during their secondary school. The unscientific branch has students weaker in their study level than the scientific branch.
3. Bachelors' English grades during their previous study are mostly "good", while masters' grades are mostly "medium". This shows that master's students are weaker in English than bachelors.
4. Both bachelors and masters enjoy learning English and see that it is interesting. That means there is an intrinsic motivation among them.
5. Both types of students know that studying English needs effort and time.
6. There are two strong motivators for learning English among bachelor and master students: that is getting a job and communicating with foreigners. They are extrinsic motivations.
7. Nearly half of the students (bachelors and masters) have encouragement within their environment. However, we can say that the other half have not.
8. There is the lecturer's encouragement to bachelor and master students. Both kinds of encouragement (the previous point) are external motivations for students.
9. Competition is considered a motivation. It exists among bachelors 77% much more than masters 45%.
10. To stop learning English for a while is not a demotivation for bachelors, while among masters it is a demotivation.
11. Learning English to pass the class is a great motivation among both bachelor's and master's students.
12. Bachelors try to improve their English, i.e. motivation, while master students don't have such motivation.
13. To summarize, master students have demotivation more than bachelor ones. Henceforth, they are weaker in English than the bachelors.

**Conclusion**

There are motivation and demotivation for learning English as a foreign language among students of the College of Tourism Sciences. The intrinsic motivations are the enjoyment of learning English, competition among students, improvement of their foreign language. The extrinsic motivations are of getting a job, communication with foreigners, encouragement from their teacher and environment, and the desire to pass their class. The demotivation is of having effort and time to learn English as it is a foreign language for them and lack of self-confidence. As a result, Motivation outweigh demotivation; hence, there is a positive view concerning English as a foreign language to learn.

To present the motivation may develop the ways for learning English & of teaching. On the other hand, to know the demotivation is shedding lights on a cause for failure in learning a foreign language.

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